

The Ukrainian people earned our support when they put their lives on the line at the Maidan and turned to face the Russian threat with both toughness and restraint. We should stand with the Ukrainian government and the Ukrainian people because they share our democratic values, and because Russia's effort to dismember their country through the threat of force, if allowed to succeed, could undermine decades of stability and a peaceful, democratic, and united Europe.

Ukrainians understand there will not be American "boots on the ground" in their country. But there are a number of important steps we can take to support the Ukrainians in their struggle.

First, we must expedite the aid we have already promised them—including both financial assistance and nonlethal military equipment—to make sure it arrives as quickly as possible.

Second, we should provide additional support, including body armor and fuel, that the Ukrainians need to protect themselves. We should provide the Ukrainians with firearms and ammunition if they need them—but it appears that at this point they do not.

Third, we should make more robust use of the powers established in Executive order 13661, which authorizes sanctions against the Russian financial, energy, metals, mining, engineering, and defense sectors, to ensure that the Putin regime pays a heavy price for its illegal actions. President Obama's action to sanction more wealthy individuals in Putin's circle, as well as businesses they own, is a wise one, but we can do more.

Fourth, we should ensure that Russian banks are subject to the significant tax penalties imposed on non-compliant banks by the Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act, or FATCA, the antitax evasion law set to take effect in July. Russian banks and financial institutions that fail to register with the Internal Revenue Service and obtain the required identification number by July 1 of this year will be non-compliant with FATCA and become subject to a 30-percent withholding tax on any U.S. investment earnings. We should not negotiate with either Russia or certain Russian banks on measures to provide relief from FATCA's sanctions until Russia honors its diplomatic commitments and takes steps to diffuse tensions in Crimea and eastern Ukraine, including by withdrawing Russian troops from the border region.

Finally, we should use the existing authorities to take on Russia's manipulation of energy prices and supplies which it has used to coerce not only Ukraine but also many of its neighbors. To be most effective, these actions should be taken in close coordination with our friends and allies in Europe, many of whom are directly affected by Russia's abuses and threatened by its actions. We must take concrete steps toward substituting energy from other sources for the countries that would be impacted by a reduction

of Russian energy. We must actively become involved in energy development, diversification, and conservation, even if it means paying higher prices for fuel, to break Russia's iron grip on this market, and to prevent future acts of attempted political extortion by Russia from being effective.

The people of Ukraine are proud of their fight for freedom at the Maidan, as are the people of Afghanistan of the courage they showed, when they voted in record numbers to reject the Taliban in their April 5 election. Both countries are struggling for values that we, as a Nation, have always shared. They both deserve our support, and we should continue to give it to them.

THE MINIMUM WAGE

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to voice my disappointment over yesterday's vote to increase the Federal minimum wage. It is vitally important that working families receive a long-overdue pay increase, but once again the Senate failed to move forward on a crucial piece of legislation.

At \$7.25 per hour, today's Federal minimum wage fails to provide a living wage for many Americans. Working a standard 40-hour week, 52 weeks a year, with no time off and no sick days, the minimum wage pays just over \$15,000 a year.

In many parts of the country, including California, that salary is nowhere near enough for an individual to subsist, let alone a family.

It is difficult to fathom how a single mother working a minimum wage job—or jobs—can survive. These are the Americans who would benefit from this bill.

To get a better idea of what the standard 40-hour-a-week worker must earn to meet basic necessities, I had my staff look at the cost-of-living in various California cities.

In San Francisco, a single adult with no children would need to earn over \$12 an hour to meet basic necessities.

In Los Angeles, they would need to make over \$11 dollars an hour. The same goes for San Diego. That amount only increases for families.

By one measure, a single mother with two children living in San Francisco would have to earn almost \$30 an hour just to meet basic necessities.

I would add that we aren't debating an exorbitant increase. Moving from \$7.25 to \$10.10 would still leave many low-income working families well short of a living wage. But it is a start, and it would benefit millions of low-income working Americans.

According to the Congressional Budget Office, the proposed minimum wage increase would increase incomes for 16.5 million low-wage workers; 97 percent of the low-wage working population would benefit from this increase; 900,000 low-wage workers would move above the poverty line; and the increase in the federal minimum wage

could reduce demands on other Federal assistance programs.

A lot of attention has been given to CBO's estimate that increasing the minimum wage would lead to 500,000 job losses for low wage workers. It is important to note that CBO's estimate is the median in a wide range of estimates on the employment effects of increases in the minimum wage.

When you study the report, you find that most estimates of job losses related to increases in the minimum wage are clustered around zero, which means that most studies have found that increasing the minimum wage has a negligible effect on employment.

This isn't to say businesses won't have to make some adjustments. Some will have to raise prices, some might see slightly reduced profits, and some might slow hiring or choose to reduce their workforce.

But the effects will not be devastating, as opponents of the minimum wage increase suggest. In fact, cities and States throughout the country are natural experiments for the effects of a minimum wage increase on jobs.

The minimum wage in San Francisco is currently \$10.79 per hour. Far from an economic catastrophe, San Francisco is enjoying a sustained period of economic growth and employment. San Jose, which has a similar minimum wage, also has a robust labor market.

Bloomberg has also researched the effects of minimum wage increases on employment and found that employment effects are negligible and, in general, States that have recently raised the minimum wage are actually creating more jobs than those that haven't.

Washington State increased its minimum wage in 1998 and tied the wage to increases in inflation. The minimum wage is currently the highest in the country.

Since that time, annual job growth in Washington has outpaced the rest of the country, and the service industry has added thousands of jobs. There are many other examples of localities that exceed the Federal minimum wage and continue to experience sustained job growth.

It is clear to me that businesses are capable of adjusting for an increase in the minimum wage in a way that will allow them to thrive.

And a minimum wage increase would not only alleviate some of the burdens and obstacles facing the low wage work force, it would also put more than \$30 billion in the pockets of workers struggling to get by, those most in need of a pay raise.

According to many economists, that additional income could spur local economies, more than offsetting any negative effects from a minimum wage increase.

In a time of nearly unprecedented income inequality—during which the wealthy have actually made even more money—it is vitally important that Congress enacts laws to allow all

Americans to benefit from economic advancement.

Increasing the minimum wage is certainly not the only option. Congress should be looking elsewhere to do even more to ensure that children born into low income families aren't locked into a life of poverty. But increasing the minimum wage would be a step toward that goal. It would also serve as an indication that Congress appreciates the daunting challenges posed by income inequality and is willing to confront them.

Mr. President, I fully support an increase in the minimum wage and I hope that we can come together to find a way to reconsider the minimum wage bill and move it forward.

FORD ADMINISTRATION'S 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, this year marks the 40th anniversary of Gerald R. Ford taking the oath of office and becoming the 38th President of the United States. The Gerald R. Ford Museum in Grand Rapids, MI will be commemorating this significant anniversary throughout 2014 by highlighting the impact of his service to our country.

Gerald Ford took the oath of office on August 9, 1974, in the aftermath of the Watergate scandal, the Vietnam war, and President Nixon's resignation, a very tumultuous time in our Nation's history. He reflected this when he stated:

I assume the Presidency under extraordinary circumstances . . . This is an hour of history that troubles our minds and hurts our hearts.

Although he was born in Omaha, NE, his family made Grand Rapids, MI, their home very soon after his birth. After high school, he attended the University of Michigan and played football for the Wolverines, earning the designation of Most Valuable Player. Choosing to attend law school instead of pursuing a professional football career, he completed his law degree at Yale University and then returned to Michigan, where he started a law practice.

After serving with the U.S. Navy during World War II, he returned to his home State where he became a partner in a Grand Rapids law firm and involved in the political scene. His experiences in the war led him to reject his previously isolationist leanings and adopt an outlook of internationalism. As a result, at the age of 35, he challenged the isolationist incumbent for Michigan's Fifth Congressional District in Congress and won.

He served his district, our State, and the Nation honorably. He was reelected 12 times, each with more than 60 percent of the vote. As a new Congressman, he quickly established a reputation for personal integrity, hard work, and the ability to deal effectively with both Republicans and Democrats, qualities that would define his entire

political career. During his time in Congress, he was appointed to the Appropriations Committee and rose to prominence on the Defense Appropriations Subcommittee. He was well respected by his colleagues and was a leader in the Republican Party, serving as the minority leader for 8 years.

After the resignation of Vice President Spiro Agnew, Ford was nominated by President Nixon and confirmed by Congress to fill the vacancy. Less than a year later, Nixon resigned and Ford became President, making him the first President who was not elected to either the Presidency or Vice Presidency.

As President, Gerald Ford was confronted with the challenges of dealing with inflation, reviving a depressed economy, solving chronic energy shortages, and trying to ensure world peace. He described himself as a moderate in domestic affairs, an internationalist in foreign affairs, and a conservative in fiscal policy. Respected for his integrity and openness, he worked to restore our country's trust and confidence in the Presidency.

One of his first acts as President was to pardon Richard Nixon before criminal charges were brought against him. Despite strong negative public reaction and political backlash, Ford maintained that this was the right thing to do for the good of the country, and history has borne this out. When the new President, Jimmy Carter, took the oath of office, President Carter summed up the sentiment expressed by many about Ford's Presidency by saying, "For myself and for our Nation, I want to thank my predecessor for all he has done to heal our land."

Gerald Ford and his wife Betty continued to be active in the political process after leaving office. We are proud that Gerald Ford was from Michigan and an important part of the Ford legacy lives on through the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library in Ann Arbor, MI, and the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum in Grand Rapids.

I hope my colleagues will join me in recognizing our 38th President and his outstanding contributions to our country on the 40th anniversary of his Presidency.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

PLYMOUTH COUNTY, IOWA

• Mr. HARKIN. Mr. President, the strength of my State of Iowa lies in its vibrant local communities, where citizens come together to foster economic development, make smart investments to expand opportunity, and take the initiative to improve the health and well-being of residents. Over the decades, I have witnessed the growth and revitalization of so many communities across my State, and it has been deeply gratifying to see how my work in Congress has supported these local efforts.

I have always believed in accountability for public officials, and this, my

final year in the Senate, is an appropriate time to give an accounting of my work across four decades representing Iowa in Congress. I take pride in accomplishments that have been national in scope—for instance, passing the Americans with Disabilities Act and spearheading successful farm bills. But I take a very special pride in projects that have made a big difference in local communities across my State.

Today, I would like to give an accounting of my work with leaders and residents of Plymouth County to build a legacy of a stronger local economy, better schools and educational opportunities, and a healthier, safer community.

Between 2001 and 2013, the creative leadership in your community has worked with me to secure funding in Plymouth County worth over \$11 million and successfully acquired financial assistance from programs I have fought hard to support, which have provided more than \$1 million to the local economy.

Of course my favorite memories of working together have to include working with community leaders on the renovation of the American Legion building in LeMars. The funding allowed for a new glass block window and improvements to the existing front door to meet code on the first floor and the replacement of windows, repainting, and new signage on the second floor.

Among the highlights:

Main Street Iowa: One of the greatest challenges we face—in Iowa and all across America—is preserving the character and vitality of our small towns and rural communities. This isn't just about economics; it is also about maintaining our identity as Iowans.

Main Street Iowa helps preserve Iowa's heart and soul by providing funds to revitalize downtown business districts. This program has allowed towns like LeMars to use that money to leverage other investments to jumpstart change and renewal. I am so pleased that Plymouth County has earned \$30,000 through this program. These grants build much more than buildings; they build up the spirit and morale of people in our small towns and local communities.

Investing in Iowa's economic development through targeted community projects: In Western Iowa, we have worked together to grow the economy by making targeted investments in important economic development projects including improved roads and bridges, modernized sewer and water systems, and better housing options for residents of Plymouth County. In many cases, I have secured Federal funding that has leveraged local investments and served as a catalyst for a whole ripple effect of positive, creative changes. For example, working with mayors, city council members, and local economic development officials in Plymouth County, I have fought for